COBBETT'S WEEKLY POLITICAL REGISTER.

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"It is also to be observed, that, though there be a just cause of war; yet may this just cause be spoiled "by the access of some vice that cleaves to the action from the mind of the agent, either that something "else, not by itself unlawful, doth more efficaciously move us to the war, than the right itself; as when "some kind of profit, public or private, is expected to arise from the war, being considered apart from the "cause whereon the war is justified; which vice is very dangerous."——GROTIUS.

CATHOLIC CLAIMS.

LETTER II.

ADDRESSED TO THE RT. HON. W. PITT.

SIR,——In the letter, which I lately addressed to you, I endeavoured to impress on your mind the necessity of fulfilling your engagements to the Catholics, from the important considerations of honour, policy, and good faith. The pains which I have taken, to enforce the immediate execution of a measure, involving in its happy consequences the existence of the empire, have not, I trust, been bestowed without effect. But appearances are unfortunately such, as not to afford a very substantial hope, that the dearest interests of the country will supersede all mean and selfish considerations. Undismayed, however, by events that may lead to a happy termination, and animated with the purest motives of advancing the welfare of my country, I will freely use the undeniable privilege of every Briton, to canvass the actions of his Majesty's civil servants, and will review some of those grounds, on which, I conceive, your opinion concerning Catholic claims was once decisively formed.——There was a time, Sir, when you felt the urgent necessity of restoring to every Briton the rights and privileges secured by the constitution; when you even sacrificed, in this noble cause, the first offices of the state to a strong sense of substantial justice, and to high and refined notions of honour. What gave birth to such a display of virtue and patriotism? You had doubtless obtained a thorough knowledge of the theory and practice of the British constitution. You knew that its benefits should be open to all loyal subjects without distinction; and regretting that four millions of inhabitants, or one fourth of the population of the United Kingdom, remained in a state of proscriptive exclusion, you laboured to secure to them the birth-right of Englishmen. What a pity it is, that the charms of returning power, the sudden prospect of recovering your elevation, should have shakened your manly and determined purpose!——The truth is, Sir, the continuance of the restrictions and disabilities against the Roman Catholics, without a shadow of reason, is at best a wanton and injudicious suspension of the great charter of our liberties. It is there provided, (chap. 29) that "No freeman shall "be disseised of his freehold, or liberties, "or free customs." By liberties, Lord Coke understands, 1st. The laws of the realm; 2dly, The freedom which the subjects of the realm possess; 3dly, The franchises and privileges which the subjects receive from the favour of the crown. (See Lord Coke's observations on Magna Charta, 2 Institut.) On what ground can you continue to sanction any longer, by your authority, the least painful restrictions against Catholics, while you thus set at defiance the *fundamental* law of the realm, that great foundation of all our liberties, and the constant pride and boast of Englishmen? Reflect, Sir, against whom these odious restrictions continue to be directed. They operate, as I shall shew you in the course of my letter, *solely* against the Roman Catholics, the professors of that religion, which introduced christianity and consequent civilization, with all its attendant blessings, into this island; and which gave birth to all those benefices, prebends, and ecclesiastical preferments of every kind now existing in this country. These disabilities are perpetuated *solely* against the Catholic descendants of those generous and high spirited barons, by whose noble exertions the Great Charter was first secured, the foundation of English liberty was first laid. It cannot be a secret to you, Sir, who must be presumed to possess at least an ordinary knowledge of the history of your country, that the liberties, which fill with pride the breast of an Englishman, which have contributed more than any other cause to place this country in the high and commanding situation it holds among the nations of the civilized world, that these benefits are to be ascribed originally to the vigour of Catholic Barons, and Catholic Bishops; to the spirited conduct of a Langton, the Catholic Archbishop of Canterbury at that time. "A man," says Hume, "whose memory "ought always to be respected by the Eng- "lish." (History of England, Vol. II. p.

78, edit. 1773) And can it be now made a question in the 19th century, whether the fullest privileges of the constitution should be restored to the Catholics of the present day! Shall *they alone* be debarred from the full enjoyment of its benefits, whose ancestors first secured these inestimable blessings? Such a political degradation must be repugnant to the feelings of a grateful and generous nation.——If I am rightly informed, you and your friends reject with a species of sanctified horror, the term emancipation, which the Catholics employ, when they solicit the privileges of British subjects. Emancipation is a deliverance from slavery of one kind or another. As to the situation of the Roman Cotholics, who are excluded from the benefits of the constitution, I am justified in calling it a state of civil servitude, by the authority of a great man, whom I was once proud to call my friend, and whose political maxims are deemed oracular by the statesmen of the present time. "To be under the state," says Mr. Burke, "but not the state itself, *nor any* "*part of it*, that is, to be nothing at all in "the commonwealth, is a situation perfectly intelligible: but to those who fill "that situation, not very pleasant, when it "is understood. It is a state of *civil servi*"*tude* by the force of the definition." (See Mr. Burke's celebrated Letter to Sir Hercules Langrishe, Beaconsfield, Jan. 3, 1792. The whole of this sensible performance I beg leave earnestly to recommend to the attentive perusal of every member of Parliament before the discussion of the Catholic claims). From this state of political slavery, the Catholics, however you may dislike the term emancipation, loudly demand a deliverance.——The exclusion from the dignities of the state, and from offices of trust, is rendered a peculiar hardship, by the change which has taken place in the situation of the different governments of Europe. In former periods, when governments subsisted on domains belonging to them, an exclusion from offices could scarcely be accounted a hardship. But now a very general revolution has happened in the greatest monarchies of Europe. Governments are wholly supported by private contribution; a considerable portion of the industry of individuals is given to the state, and the subject receives an indemnification of the loss, by the returned profits of his labour through the channel of offices and employments. When the favours of the crown are distributed with an impartial hand, universal satisfaction must naturally prevail, and an accurate balance is established between the government and the people. But when a large part of the community is excluded from a proper share in the general dividend, such an exclusion becomes an act of the highest injustice, and amounts to a state of double or treble taxation. "If," says Mr. Burke, "a state should be so un"happy, as to think it cannot subsist with"out such a barbarous proscription, the "persons so proscribed ought to be indem"nified by the remission of a large part of "their taxes, by an immunity from the of"fices of public burden, and by an exemp"tion from being pressed into any military "or naval service." (Mr. Burke's Letter on the penal Laws against Irish Catholics, 1782.)——If, Sir, amidst your numerous schemes of finance, you should undertake to provide for the exigencies of the state by the expedient of a lottery on a new plan; if according to the supposed scheme, you should oblige each individual to contribute a sum proportioned to his income, if you should then allow the chances of certain prizes not to all the contributors, but to those only who think with you in religion, or rather, who will swear with you to abhor transubstantiation, in that case, what opinion should we form of your notions of distributive justice? You probably would be deemed as iniquitous a minister as ever guided the councils of a Sovereign. But reflect a moment on the exclusion of Catholics from places of emolument, and tell me how you can possibly be free from blame in sanctioning for a day such a barbarous and inhuman proscription. Here you have four millions of people, who contribute to the formation of this state lottery, but who are deprived of their just chances of a prize, by laws which operate solely against them. If national justice can be found in such a proceeding, I must profess myself totally unacquainted with its first elements.——Place yourself, Sir, in the situation of a Roman Catholic, who professes certain doctrines confessedly innocuous, which he holds necessary to his eternal salvation. Were you impressed with such a conviction, you would deem it a cruel and intolerable hardship to be debarred from the offices and dignities of the state, and from a fair and honourable occasion of displaying your talents in the service of your country. You would consider it a most extraordinary proceeding that a conscientious attachment to the religion of the Edwards and the Henries, should be made a bar to employments of a civil nature. You, perhaps, would hear with pain the exalted encomiums which are justly bestowed on our

constitution, when you would be excluded from a participation in its blessings. Judge of the feelings of four millions of people by the dictates of your own mind, and then determine, whether after raising their hopes to the fairest prospects, you are not solemnly bound, under the present circumstances of the country, to espouse their cause and gratify their wishes.—Much, Sir, has been said and written in this country on the important subject of toleration. Many excellent lessons have been given by different writers, but they have not yet been reduced to practice by his Majesty's government. Whether you have formed a decided opinion on the subject, I cannot pretend to determine, as I am unacquainted with all those secret motives which have given birth to so many *liberal promises and professions*, from you towards the Catholics of Ireland. Perhaps it may not be improper to state the doctrine of toleration, grounded on the most incontestible principles and supported by the highest authorities. With respect to that religious intolerance, which leads each church to hold the exclusive doctrine of salvation, it must be admitted to be perfectly proper and harmless. Truth is unquestionably *one*; and the divine Author of the Christian religion pronounces his fold to be *one* (John x. 16.) Now, whoever embraces any religion, must act from a conviction that he is about to enter this one fold, or one church established by Christ; he must, by the very nature of his own conduct, think himself in the right road, and those of different persuasions out of the true Church of Christ. Hence the Church of England and the Church of Rome, both hold the exclusive doctrine (See the last article of the Athanasian Creed in the Book of Common Prayer.) On this account the late attempt of a noble lord to draw a charge of disloyalty against Catholics from a speculative tenet, common both to them and Protestants, excited sentiments of surprise, compassion, and astonishment throughout the country. (See the most singular and extraordinary correspondence ever submitted to public inspection, between Lord Redesdale and the Earl of Fingal, Reg. Vol. V. p. 215.)—Having thus stated the nature of religious intolerance, I believe you will agree with me in saying, that it must be confined to the speculative tenets, and the spiritual power claimed by each particular church. All external violence, by which men are forced to enter into any sect or society, cannot but be displeasing to Him, who does not even save his creatures without their concurrence. The persecution of the civil magistrate on the ground of religion is peculiarly deserving of animadversion. His duty, by the nature of his office, is confined to the impartial execution of equal laws, to the general care of all his subjects with respect to *civil* concerns, to the security of their property, lives, and temporal welfare, and to the punishment of crimes which disturb the peace of society. To interfere in the religion of his subjects, by claiming the privilege of directing their belief, by propagating his own mode of worship in defiance of the inward persuasion of individuals, by inflicting for the same purpose the punishments of rapine, confiscation, tortures, and death; even to resort to the more gentle mode of civil proscriptions, to exclusions from civil offices, which are perpetuated by the purse of individuals, all this is to jumble heaven and earth together, to confound things which are in their own nature distinct, and to claim a power which, unquestionably, he does not possess. The civil magistrate, may indeed, make a legal establishment by encouraging one mode of worship, by honouring and rewarding its ministers, by securing the immunities of his church from rapacity, even by enabling it to raise its head in the highest assemblies of the nation. But if, *on the mere pretext of religion*, without alleging any crime, that disturbs the peace of society, he proceeds to temporal disabilities and penalties, if he excludes his other subjects from civil offices and employments, he by that very act becomes not so much the protector of his own church, as the persecutor of the other modes of worship in his dominions. The Grand Signior might on the same grounds, be justified, in the sight of God and man, in confining his favours to the professors of the Koran, and in extending, to his other subjects, nothing but penalties of every description. — But, Sir, every man can regulate the affairs of his own conscience by an unalienable right, wholly independent of the civil authority. This right was exercised by the first Christians, in defiance of the Majesty of the Roman Empire, and its tutelary deities; and the invincible constancy of those heroes has excited the admiration of all Christian nations. It is truly an unalienable right. "Nobody," says Locke, "neither single persons, nor churches, nay, nor "even commonwealths, have any just title "to invade the civil rights, and worldly "goods of each other upon pretence of religion." (Locke's Letter on Toleration, p. 68, edit. Glasgow, 1757.) — Individuals can indeed, and often have been, punished by temporal penalties, for seditiously dis-

turbing the religious establishment of their country. That becomes a civil crime, and is unquestionably punishable by the civil magistrate. But, to invade the temporal rights of the subject, on the ground of his religious persuasion, is to sow the seeds of discord and war, and to excite direct provocation to hatred, to rapine, and to slaughter. It evidently tends to disturb the peace of mankind, by encouraging a well known fanatical maxim, that dominion is founded in grace, and that religion is to be propagated by force of arms.——To make an application of these principles to the circumstances of our own country. You, as minister of a great nation, should shew all indulgence to the speculative tenets of different sects, however intolerant they may be in a religious point of view. For it is incontestably true, that articles of faith, or opinions which have no connexion with the concerns of the state, can never be subject to civil control. You are likewise pledged, by the situation which you hold, to support the religious establishment of your country, and to secure its rights and immunities. But when you are assured of the loyalty of those who dissent from the religion of the state, when you have not the smallest reason to imagine, that they will disturb the established mode of worship, whatever their own belief may be, you are bound, by all laws of heaven and earth, to extend to them the fullest benefits of civil toleration, and an equitable participation of the rights of British subjects. To adopt a contrary mode of conduct, to punish men solely for a conscientious adherence to religious opinions, resembles the tyrannical conduct of an arbitrary monarch, who should direct civil disabilities against an antiquated sect of philosophers, for following the systems of the Peripatetic or Cartesian schools, in opposition to the modern discoveries of Newton, of Kepler, and of Halley.——But still, Sir, some persons may be alarmed at the progress of Catholic doctrines; they may affect much apprehension that the sectaries may be clamorous for indulgence, and under this gloomy state of mind, they will perhaps oppose every plan for the repeal or modification of the Test Act. It is much to be questioned, whether ignorance, bigotry, or perhaps, the most selfish views be not concealed under the garb of zeal for the establishment. You have not to learn that the Catholic doctrine, that the harmless tenets of transubstantiation and invocation of saints did not give birth to that celebrated act, 25 Car. 2 cap. 2 The real grounds are to be sought for in the bias of the court to a connexion with the Catholic powers, and the dreaded succession of the Duke of York. It is stated to be an act to prevent the dangers arising from Popish recusants. "It was principally," says Eckard, "if not solely levelled at the "Roman Catholics in order to preclude "them from places of note and trust." (Eckard's Hist. of England, p 893). The dangers whether real or imaginary, which this law was calculated to avert, are now completely removed in the judgment of all mankind, and the continuance of the act becomes at once unnecessary and oppressive. The sectaries are, indeed, included in the *letter* of the regulation, but it is full well known, that against them it has long ceased to operate.——Many among the various descriptions of dissenters resort without hesitation to an occasional conformity, and those who are less pliant, are relieved by the annual bill of indemnity, which in fact, amounts to a suspension of the law. But, Catholics consider compliance as a desertion of their faith. Thus, it appears, that they *only* are excluded from the benefits of the constitution, by the operation of a law, which continues, though the cause that gave it birth has long ceased to exist. While the dissenters fill our corporations, and enjoy places of trust and emolument, while the presbyterians of Scotland, a race of men, by habits and disposition, infinitely more averse to the Church of England, than Roman Catholics, are encouraged by every species of patronage, and fill the highest departments of the state, civil, naval, and military; the Catholics are debarred from these advantages, considered as a wretched and degraded society of men, and treated as exiles in their own land. Is this proscriptive exclusion consistent with the spirit of the British constitution? Is it agreeable to the dictates of justice and policy? Is it necessary for the maintenance of the established Church? Suffer me to recur again to the authority of Mr. Burke on this subject. "I cannot conceive how "any thing worse can be said of the Protes- "tant religion of the Church of England, "than this, that wherever it is judged pro- "per to give it a legal establishment, it be- "comes necessary to deprive the body of "the people if they adhere to their old opi- "nions, of their "liberties and all their free "customs," and to reduce them to a state "of civil servitude." (See Letter to Sir Hercules Langrishe.)——I perhaps, may be told, that the injury done to the Catholics is not so considerable, as to merit the odious name of civil exclusion; and that the Catholics of Ireland were relieved by an important act of the 33 Geo. III. c. 21. 'No man, Sir, can think more highly than I do of that

paternal goodness, in which this substantial relief is said to have originated; and every sentiment of attachment, every tribute of admiration and applause is due from grateful subjects to a beneficent Sovereign. But do you imagine that you can stop here, consistently either with policy or justice? Do you suppose, that after recognising the principle, that Catholics may safely be admitted to places of trust, you can continue to distribute the first dignities of the state among a few hundred thousand individuals, and that the whole mass of Catholic population is to remain satisfied with the lowest and least lucrative employments? No, Sir, these are not your sentiments; you have long promised more; you stand pledged to carry into effect the claims of the Catholics. I will not, therefore, insult your understanding, by pointing out the fatal consequences of suffering so large a part of the community to remain in its present state of political degradation. I must, however, remind you before I quit this part of my subject, that the relief alluded to is confined solely to the Catholics of Ireland. Those in Great Britain are still debarred from the birth rights of Englishmen. Even the elective franchise is but tolerated by favour. And yet, Sir, to my certain knowledge, a more deserving class of men, persons of more animated loyalty to their beloved Sovereign, and of more ardent attachment to the constitution of their country, are not to be found in the whole compass of his Majesty's dominions.——There is some reason to imagine, Sir, that a portion of the old leaven, of the antiquated and bigotted hatred towards Catholics, still remains in the country. When the great question of their claims shall be made a subject of discussion, it is not improbable, that some of the juvenile and unfledged statesmen of the present period, some of the sanctified politicians will be alarmed for the safety of the Church, will feel the workings of the old spirit, will renew the exploded and ridiculous charges of superstitious fooleries, idolatry, impiety, and atheism, and will pour forth against the Catholic religion a torrent of the most virulent and offensive abuse, which a foul imagination, assisted by volubility of tongue, can display. Such a scene will remind us of the description which the poet gives of the eruption of Mount Ætna:

" Interdum scopulos, *avulsaque viscera*
" *montis*
" *Erigit eructans*, liquefactaque saxa sub-
" auras
" Cum gemitu glomerat, fundoque exæs-
" tuat imo."

Virgil Æneid, lib 3, v. 575, *et seq.*

But, Sir, peace to all such! I am not addressing myself to the herd of mankind, to the unthinking or the uninformed vulgar, however they may be accidentally distinguished by rank or by fortune. I am speaking to a man of superior sense, and superior attainments; a man above the workings of bigotry, and the rage of fanaticism. The question, after what has been said, lies in a very narrow compass. Four millions of subjects, deprived of the benefits of the constitution, ardently look for the restoration of those " liberties and free customs" which are secured to Britons by the Great Charter, and which are unquestionably their birth right, unless they forfeit it by disloyal conduct, or the admission of principles hostile to the safety of the state. Now, Sir, I appeal to you, whether in the conduct and principles of the Roman Catholics any thing of this description can be found. You know full well, that their loyalty has frequently been recognised by the legislature, and that it is placed beyond a doubt by the evidence of facts. You are fully convinced that their religious principles are perfectly innocuous, and compatible with the tranquillity of any government.——Suffer me, Sir, to bring to your recollection an event, which took place about sixteen years ago. The committee of English Catholics waited on you, to state their grievances, from which they begged to be relieved; and, before any farther proceeding you requested to be furnished with authentic evidence of the opinions of the Catholic Clergy, and the Catholic Universities abroad, with respect to the existence and extent of the Pope's dispensing power. Three questions were accordingly framed and sent to the Universities of Paris, Louvain, Alcala, Douay, Salamanca, and Valladolid, and answers were requested. The questions were, 1st. Whether the pope, cardinals, or any body of men possessed any civil authority whatever in this realm. 2dly. Whether the pope or any set of men could dispense with his Majesty's subjects from their oath of allegiance. 3dly. Whether it was a principle of the Catholic Church, that no faith was to be kept with heretics. By all these Universities the most precise and satisfactory answers were given; all foreign jurisdiction of a civil nature within this realm was peremptorily denied to exist in the pope, cardinals, or any other body of men; the power of dispensing with the oath of allegiance was equally rejected, and the principle that no faith was to be kept with heretics was exploded with horror, as totally foreign to Catholic doctrine. Such was the unanimous consent of these Universities. But the Doc-

tors of Louvain, prefaced their answer with a remarkable preamble. They express their readiness to give their opinion, but they are "struck with astonishment that such questions should, at "the end of the 18th century, be proposed "to a learned body by the inhabitants of a "kingdom, that glories in the talents and "discernment of its natives." (See all these pieces apud Plowden Hist. Rev. tom. 2, p. 2, Append. p. 199—204.)—You remained, Sir, perfectly satisfied with these answers: for you supported the bill, which afterwards passed in favour of the English Catholics. But the astonishment of the Flemish Doctors, of men generally undervalued as deficient in liberality of sentiment, was perfectly natural. What, Sir, could have induced you to expose yourself and your country to ridicule, by proposing such questions to a learned body, in an enlightened age? Had you taken a view of the map of Europe, and examined the prevalence of the Catholic religion in the different states, you might have satisfied yourself, the legislature, and the country, with respect to the innocent tendency of Catholic doctrines. The population of Europe amounts to more than one hundred and fifty millions of inhabitants, and of this number, nearly two-thirds, or one hundred million, are Roman Catholics. They are scattered over immense tracts of country in the north, middle, and south of Europe; they exist under every species of government, arbitrary, monarchical, mixed, and republican; they are blended with the Protestants of Germany, Denmark, and Sweden, and the Greeks in Russia; they all acknowledge the spiritual authority of the Pope, but in no place are their tenets considered as hostile to the civil government. This simple view might have dissipated all your fears, and convinced you, that no danger can possibly be apprehended from admitting Roman Catholics to the fullest enjoyment of the privileges of Britons. I hope, that when the question comes to be considered, you will calm the rage of some of your bigotted friends, by giving them this view of the subject; and that you will prevent them from disgracing themselves, the legislature, and the country, by exposing their ignorance and their prejudices in the face of Europe.—After this clear and succinct exposure of the state of the question, let me ask, Sir, what can, at this period of the world, retard the admission of the Roman Catholics to the fullest benefits of the constitution? Will you resort to the usual pretext of ministerial delay, that it is not time to propose such a measure? Is it not time, Sir, to perform an act of substantial justice, which it is disgraceful to the British government to have so long delayed? When will you cease to act the part of a procrastinating debtor, who refuses to satisfy the just demands which are made on him, till he is reduced to the most perplexing difficulties? Is it not time to carry into effect those just and salutary principles of toleration, which are known and practised almost in every country in Europe, except Great Britain? Is it not time to redeem the pledges which you have given to the Catholics of Ireland, and to rescue from disgrace the honour of the British name? Much obloquy has been injuriously thrown upon Catholics, for not keeping faith with heretics. But see, Sir, that your conduct do not afford a just ground of reproach, if it should appear, that a Protestant statesman can induce himself not to keep faith with Catholics. Let me tell you, Sir, that *it is time* to conciliate the affections of the Catholics of Ireland, and unite the best energies of the empire against the common enemy; and that no time is to be lost in effecting this desirable purpose. If you wish to raise an impenetrable barrier against the continued encroachments, the restless ambition of a military chieftain, if you hope completely to disappoint his views of conquest, your great resources must be sought for in the spirit and unanimity of the people. Let once an enthusiatic ardour be raised in the breast of every subject of his Majesty, by interesting all equally in the defence of the laws, liberties and constitution, and we may set at defiance the menaces of an insulting foe, reduce him to fair and honourable terms of peace, confirm our independence, and still stand in the proud and commanding attitude, which we have long exhibited to the nations of Europe.——THE BRITISH OBSERVER.——*Jan. 6th*, 1805.

Discounts. 4

PUBLIC PAPERS.

WAR WITH SPAIN.——*Order issued by the Court of Madrid, dated 27th Novemb.* 1804.

The conduct which the English have observed since the event of the 5th of Oct. is almost insufferable. They attack our ships of war in whatsoever situation they may appear, and detain our commercial vessels, obliging them afterwards to return to the ports from whence they came, so that the object of their voyage is wholly frustrated. These hostile proceedings have constrained his Majesty to abandon the pacific sentiments which he has considered heretofore most conducive to the happiness of his beloved subjects; and he is therefore driven to the necessity of procuring satisfaction for

these insults, by making reprisals on English property (as is done with respect to Spanish property in England) His Majesty, however, requires that the seizures consequent on this arrangement should be proceeded in with such method and regularity, that the effects may be preserved entire, and uninjured, until the further pleasure of his Majesty be made known respecting them. The command for this purpose, which this paper conveys, is to be immediately obeyed, under your direction, and you will consider the steps proper to be taken respecting such commercial transactions as are yet in progress, in which such English effects may be concerned.

WAR WITH SPAIN.——*Declaration of War made by Spain against England, dated Madrid, 12th Dec.* 1804.

The peace which Europe beheld with so much delight, re-established at Amiens, has, unfortunately for the welfare of nations, proved but of short duration. The rejoicings with which this happy event was celebrated upon all sides, were scarcely concluded, when the public satisfaction began to be troubled, and the advantage of the peace to disappear. The Cabinets of London and Paris held Europe suspended, and agitated between its terrors and its hopes, seeing the event of the negotiations every day become more uncertain, until the moment that discord arrived at such an height, as to kindle between them the fire of a war, which must naturally extend itself to other powers; since it was very difficult for Spain and Holland, who had treated jointly with France at Amiens, and whose interests and political relations are so reciprocally connected, to avoid finally taking part in the grievances and offences offered to their ally.——In these circumstances, his Majesty, supported by the most solid principles of a wise policy, preferred pecuniary subsidies to the contingent of troops and ships with which he was bound to assist France, in virtue of the treaty of alliance in 1796: and as well by means of his minister in London, as of the English agents at Madaid, he gave the British government to understand, in the most positive manner, his decided and firm resolutiou to remain neutral during the war; making no doubt that he should quickly have the satisfaction of seeing that these ingenuous assurances were well received by the court of London.—Nevertheless, that cabinet, which must have resolved in silence before-hand, for its own particular ends, upon the renovation of the war with Spain, and which it was always able to declare, not with the forms and solemnities prescribed by the Law of Nations, but by means of positive aggressions, which should turn to its own profit, sought the most frivolous pretexts to bring into doubt the conduct of Spain, which was truly neutral, and to give demonstrations, at the same time, to the desires of his Britannic Majesty, to preserve the peace, all with the intention of gaining time, cajoling the Spanish government, and holding in uncertainty the opinion of the English nation upon its own premeditated and unjust designs, which could in no manner be approved by that nation. Thus it is, that in London it appeared artfully to accept various reclamations from Spanish individuals, which were addressed to it; while its agents in Madrid magnified the pacific intentions of their own Sovereign: but they never shewed themselves satisfied with the frankness and friendship with which all their notes were answered, rather anxious for proclaiming and magnifying armaments which had no existence, and pretending, contrary to the most positive protests on the part of Spain, that the pecuniary succours given to France were not merely an equivalent for the troops and ships which were stipulated in the treaty of 1796, but an indefinite and immense stock, which did not permit them to consider Spain in any other light than as a principal party in the war.——Moreover, as there was not time entirely to banish the illusion under which they laboured, they exacted, as the precise conditions upon which they would consider Spain as neutral, the cessation of every armament in her ports, and a prohibition of the sale of prizes brought into them. And, notwithstanding that both of these conditions, although urged in a tone superlatively haughty and unusual in political transactions, were immediately complied with, and religiously observed, they persisted, nevertheless, to manifest their want of confidence, and they quitted Madrid with eagerness, immediately after receiving dispatches from their court, of which they did not communicate a particle of the contents. The context which results from all this between the conduct of the Cabinets of London and Madrid, must be sufficient to shew clearly to all Europe, the bad faith, and the secret and pervese aims of the English ministry; even if they had not manifested them by the abominable crime of the surprise, battle, and capture of the four Spanish frigates, which, navigating in the full security which peace inspires, were fraudulently attacked in consequence of orders from the English government, signed in the very moment in which it was faithlessly exacting con-

ditions for the prolongation of the peace, in which every possible security was given to it, and in which its own vessels were provided with provisions and refreshments in the ports of Spain.——Those very vessels, which were enjoying the most perfect hospitality, and were experiencing the fidelity with which Spain was proving to England the good faith of her engagements, and how firm her resolutions were to maintain her neutrality—those very ships carried, concealed in the bosom of their commanders, the unjust orders of the English cabinet for assaulting Spanish property on the seas—iniquitous orders, and profusely circulated, since all its vessels of war on the seas of America and Europe, were already detaining and carrying into its harbours as many Spanish vessels as they met with, without respecting even the cargoes of grain which were coming from all parts to succour a faithful nation, in a year of the greatest calamity. Barbarous orders, since they deserve no other name, to sink every Spanish ship under an hundred tons; to burn those which they found on shore on the coast; and to make prize of, and carry to Malta, those only which exceeded an hundred tons. The master of a laud, of Valentia, of fifty-four tons, has made this declaration, that he effected his escape in his launch upon the 16th of November, on the coast of Catalonia, when his vessel was sunk by an English vessel, whose captain took from him his papers and his flag; and informed him, that he had received these express instructions from his court. ——In spite of such atrocious actions, which proved to perfect evidence the covetous and hostile views which the English Cabinet had meditated, it was still able to carry on further its perfidious system of blinding the public opinion, alleging, for this purpose, that the Spanish frigates had not been carried into the English ports in quality of prizes, but as being detained until Spain should give the desired securities, that she would observe the strictest neutrality.——And what greater securities could or ought Spain to give? What civilized nation, until this hour, has made use of means so unjust and violent, to exact securities of another? Although England should find, at last, any claim to exact from Spain, in what manner could she justify it, after a similar atrocity? What satisfaction could she be able to give for the lamentable destruction of the frigate Mercedes, with all its cargo, its equipage, and the great number of distinguished passengers who have perished, the innocent victims of a policy so detestable?——Spain could not comply, with what she owes to herself, nor think herself able to maintain her well known honour and dignity amongst the greatest powers of Europe, were she any longer to shew herself insensible to such manifest outrages, and did not take care to revenge them with the nobleness and energy which belong to her character.—Animated with these sentiments, the magnanimous breast of the King, after having exhausted (in order to preserve the peace), all the resources compatible with the dignity of his Crown, finds himself in the hard predicament of making war upon the King of England, upon his subjects and people, omitting the formalities of style by a solemn declaration and publication, owing to the English Cabinet's having begun and continued to make the war without declaring it.——In consequence, after having given orders for an embargo, by way of reprisal, upon all English property in his dominions, and that the most convenient instructions, both for his own defence, and the offence of the enemy, should be circulated to his viceroys, captains general, and great officers of the marine, his Majesty has commanded his minister in London to retire, with all the Spanish legation; and his Majesty does not doubt, that all his subjects, inflamed with that just indignation with which the violent proceedings of England must inspire them, will not omit any of all those means to which their valour shall prompt them, of co-operating with his Majesty towards the most complete vengeance for the insult offered to the Spanish flag. For this purpose, he invites them to arm corsairs against Great-Britain, and to possess themselves, with resolution, of her ships and property, by every possible means; his Majesty promising them the greatest promptitude and celerity in the adjudication of prizes, upon the sole proof of their being English property; and his Majesty expressly renouncing, in favour of the captors, whatever part of the value of the prizes he had, upon other occasions, reserved to himself, so that they shall enjoy them in their full value, without the smallest discount.——And finally, his Majesty has resolved, that what is contained in the premises, shall be inserted in the public papers, that it may come to the knowledge of all; and also, that it shall be transmitted to the ambassadors and ministers of the King, in foreign courts, in order that all the powers shall be informed of these acts, and take interest in a cause so just; hoping that Divine Providence will bless the Spanish arms, so that they may obtain a just and convenient satisfaction for the injuries they have received.

SUMMARY OF POLITICS.

WAR WITH SPAIN.——In the preceding pages will be found the declaration of war against England, on the part of his most Catholic Majesty. Some of the ministerial writers have inculcated the propriety of abstaining from all observations upon this subject, until the appearance of the counter-declaration, which, they assure us, is about to come forth from their employers. But, while it must be allowed, that it is, as yet, impossible to form a correct judgment upon some parts of the conduct of these latter, it cannot be denied, that, as to other parts thereof, we have quite sufficient grounds whereon to judge. These writers seem to regard the Spanish declaration as the commencement of that series of acts which constitute a war; whereas, the fact is, that it is the first publicly known act of that sort on the part of Spain only, England having actually begun the war more than three months ago, and that, too, by a battle, and by the capture of ships, money, and men, and by the destruction of several hundreds of lives.——"In "order to be justifiable in taking up arms, "it is necessary, 1. That we have just cause "of complaint; 2. That a reasonable satisfac- "tion have been denied us; 3. The ruler of "the nation ought maturely to consider, "whether it be for the advantage of the "state to prosecute his right by force of "arms; and, 4. That, as it is possible, that "the fear of our arms may make an impres- "sion on the mind of our adversary, and "induce him to do us justice, we owe this "further regard to humanity, and especially "to the lives and peace of the subjects, to "declare to that unjust nation, or its chief, "that we are, at length, going to have re- "course to the last remedy; and this is "called declaring war." The division here made by a celebrated writer on public law naturally presents itself for the discussion of the subject before us, except that the question of policy, which comes under the 3d head, may, for the present, remain untouched, as interesting to our own country only.—— To begin, then, according to the order above prescribed, with the question of *right*, it is alleged by the ministerial writers, that Spain had, since the breaking out of the present war, assisted our enemy, Napoleon, with money; and also, that she had begun to make warlike preparations in her ports. These are acts of aggression; and, if committed by a power simply neutral, are unquestionably quite sufficient to justify war, on the part of the power against whom they operate, unless, upon application duly made, full satisfaction be immediately given. But, we cannot pretend to consider Spain as a power simply neutral. We must view her in war as we viewed her in peace. We must meet her now as we left her at Amiens, the ally of Napoleon; and bound, in case of war, to assist him with a fleet and an army, whether the war should be defensive or offensive. This treaty was concluded at Ildelphonso, on the 19th of August, 1796. It sets out with stipulating, that there shall exist for ever an *offensive* and *defensive* alliance between the French Republic and His Catholic Majesty the King of Spain. After stipulating for the mutual guarantee of each others dominions, it is agreed, that, when either power shall, in future, be engaged in any war, the other shall, upon requisition being made, hold in readiness, and place at the disposal of the requiring power, 15 ships of the line, 6 frigates, and 4 sloops of war, all manned and armed, victualled for six months, and stored for a year. In like case and in like manner, the power called upon is to place at the disposal of the requiring power, 18,000 infantry and 6,000 cavalry, with a proportionate train of artillery. These forces, both by land and sea, are to be paid, and maintained in every respect, by the power that furnishes them; if ships are lost, or damaged, or if men are killed, or die, or desert, the deficiency is to be immediately made up; and, lastly, if the aforesaid succours are found insufficient, the power called upon is to come forward with, and to employ, its whole force, upon the simple demand of the power already at war. Such was the connexion existing between Napoleon and Spain, when we made a treaty of peace and amity with them both at Amiens. One of the ministerial writers seems to regard this treaty as of no weight at all in the dispute, observing, that, "as to "the secret articles of their treaty of 1796 "with the Committee of Public Safety, or "the Jacobin Directors, of France, what "has this country to do with them?" Another ministerial writer, who does not pretend to regard the treaty as null and void merely because it was made with persons not now in existence, does, nevertheless, assert, that such treaty is not *valid*, unless it was "communicated to the other powers." With respect to *secrecy* relative to the stipulations of this treaty, an excuse of that sort can only serve to expose our insincerity; and, as to the *communication* of the treaty to other powers, it would be entertaining and instructive enough to hear Lord Mulgrave and his brother-in law endeavouring to prove, that, to render a treaty *valid* with regard to third powers, it must be officially communicated to those powers. What, for

instance, gave us a right to complain, by the mouth of Lord Whitworth, and in our subsequent declaration of war against France, that France had "continued to keep a "French army in Holland *in repugnance to* "*the letter of three solemn treaties?*"* No one will pretend that any of these treaties were ever officially communicated to us. What, then, gave us a right to make this complaint? What but the *notoriety* of the existence of the treaties between France and Holland? Unless, therefore, Lord Mulgrave or Lord Harrowby can make it out, that treaties between foreign powers, not officially communicated to us, are valid, or invalid, according as it suits our interest, the circumstance of the treaty of 1796 not having been communicated to us will avail us nothing: for, as to the public notoriety of its existence, and also of its stipulations, what other proof need we than the fact of its having been published in the Political Register, not only previous to the commencement of the present war, but previous to the ratification of the treaty of Amiens?† As we left Spain at the peace, therefore, we must necessarily have expected to find her at the beginning of our next war with France. Whether we should, in consequence of the existence of the treaty above spoken of, have been justified in regarding Spain as an associate with France, and, at once, making war upon her accordingly, may admit of some doubt. From what MARTENS gives as a sort of summary of the law of nations upon this point, it would seem that we should not have been justified. "Strictly speaking," says he, "a belligerent power has a right to treat as his enemies all the powers who lend assistance to the enemy, from whatever motive, or in consequence of whatever treaty. Policy has, however, induced the powers of Europe to depart from this rigorous principle. They now admit, 1. That a sovereign who furnishes troops in virtue of a treaty of subsidy, does not thereby become the enemy of the power against which those troops act; 2. That, as long as a sovereign sends to the assistance of his ally no more than the number of troops, &c. stipulated for in the treaty of alliance, and does not authorize them to serve upon any other footing than the one specified in the treaty, such sovereign ought to be looked upon as an auxiliary, and not as the enemy of the power against which his troops make war; and, of course, that such sovereign ought to be permitted to enjoy his rights of neutrality. This is more especially the case, when the aid of an auxiliary is the consequence of a treaty of general defensive alliance, concluded before the beginning of the war." It is easy to conceive reasons for adopting principles like these; and, though, in the present instance, they were intended to operate most injuriously towards the liberties of Europe, they have frequently had a directly contrary effect, and that effect has sometimes been very powerful. VATTEL, who treats the matter more at large, concurs in the doctrine of MARTENS, as to alliances which are only *defensive*, and which stipulate for the employment of only *a part* of the forces of the auxiliary power; but, if the alliance be *offensive* as well as defensive; or if, though defensive only, and even general also, it stipulates for the employment of the *whole force* of the auxiliary power, he regards that power as having, by such treaty, forfeited the rights of neutrality with respect to the antagonist of its ally, which antagonist may, of course, treat it as an associate of his enemy, and may, at once, make war upon it. Such appears to be the situation of Spain with regard to us. Her treaty with Napoleon certainly is general, but it is *offensive* as well as defensive, and though it does not positively say, that she shall bring forward her *whole force*, yet it contains a conditional stipulation to that extent, and the condition is, indeed, neither more nor less than that she shall, if his wants or will demand it, furnish him to her last ship and her last battalion. All this we knew, however, when we revived and solemnly renewed our friendly relations with her, which circumstance renders the case such an one as does not appear to have been in the contemplation of VATTEL; for, there is surely a wide difference between a treaty of alliance entered into *previous to the war*, and one entered into previous to the foregoing peace, *previous to the renewal of assurances of perfect amity*. And here, we have another instance either of the absolute necessity or of the folly or wickedness of the peace of Amiens; for, to what, if not to absolute necessity can we possibly attribute a measure, in which we acknowledged our expectation, that, in case of war, Spain would, as a matter of course, be called upon to assist France with, at least, 15 ships of the line and 24,000 soldiers? Allowing, however, that the existence of the treaty of 1796 was, of itself, sufficient to justify our making war upon Spain: allowing it to have given us the full right, that right was no longer possessed after we, either expressly or

* Register, Vol. III. p. 744.—† Register, Vol. I, p. 294.

tacitly consented to her remaining neuter, which we clearly did by suffering our minister to remain at Madrid, by entering into negotiations with her as to the manner in which she could conduct herself with regard to the belligerent parties. Here we gave up our right of war founded upon her compact with France; and, this is the "*embarrass-*" *ment*" which the partisans of Mr. Pitt and Lord Melville say their employers have been involved in by the misconduct, "the *incapa-*" *city* and *imbecility*," (to use Mr. Pitt's own words) of Lord Hawkesbury and Mr. Addington. We see, then, and we shall see more fully when the papers come to be submitted to parliament, that the situation of Spain with regard to us, became entirely changed; from an associate of our enemy, she became a neutral power, retaining none of the rights of an auxiliary arising out of previous treaties, and liable to hostility on our part if she assisted our enemy contrary to the laws of neutrality. Viewing her in this light, it was for us first to verify the fact of her aiding Napoleon, and, having obtained proof of her supplying him with money, or of her making preparations to supply him with military or naval force, the next step was to demand satisfaction, and that being refused, we had a right to make war upon her. Whether this demand was made in a proper manner; whether it was wise to draw forth her naval force against us, rather than suffer her to supply Napoleon with dollars; and whether the satisfaction she offered us was not quite sufficient; these are points upon which we are not, as yet, possessed of information whereon to judge correctly. The *right* of making war upon Spain, as a nation guilty of a breach of the laws of neutrality, *may* have been clear, it is possible, too, and, according to present appearances, barely possible, that to make war upon her *may* have been wise: but, that the *manner* of beginning that war was unjust and odious will hardly be denied by any upright and honourable man, to whatever party or country he may belong.——The ministers must deny the validity, with respect to us, of the treaty of 1796, or they call in question their right of complaining of the conduct of Spain; so that, they cannot allow of its validity, in order to avail themselves of its existence as a justification for having commenced an *undeclared* war, without destroying the very foundation of all their proceedings. Aware of this dilemma, they will, in all probability, affect to regard their attack and capture of the Spanish frigates, not as an act of *war*, but of *reprisals*. But, is it possible that the nation, or that foreign powers, will be deceived by a subterfuge like this! Reprisals, without war, are made in cases in which war would not be justifiable; and the idea of reprisals, as denoted by the word itself, naturally confines itself to wrongs of inferior magnitude, to objects respecting which there exists not the slightest doubt. GROTIUS does not seem so much as to think of making reprisals alone for any other sort of wrong than that of an unjust seizure or detention of property belonging to a state or its subjects. This is the light, too, in which the right of exercising this power is viewed by VATTEL. "If," says he, "a nation has "taken possession of what belongs to ano-"ther; if she refuses to pay a debt, to re-"pair an injury, or to give adequate satis-"faction, the latter may seize something be-"longing to the former, and apply it to her "own advantage, till she obtains payment "of what is due to her, together with inte-"rest and damages." This idea is never lost sight of in speaking of reprisals disconnected from war.——To render reprisals lawful the same writer says, "the grounds "on which they are made must be *evidently* "*just*; it must be for a *well-ascertained* and "*undeniable debt*." To make reprisals instead of at once having recourse to war, is generally a proof of justice and moderation; but, very fallacious indeed is that argument which proceeds upon the maxim, that, in cases where war would be justifiable, reprisals must, of course, be justifiable, *because they are something short of war*. "There "are cases," says VATTEL, "in which re-"prisals would be justly condemnable, even "when a declaration of war would not be "so: and these are precisely those cases "when nations may with justice take up "arms. When the question which consti-"tutes the ground of a dispute, relates, not "to an act of violence, or an injury inflict-"ed, but to a *contested* point, after an in-"effectual endeavour to obtain justice by "conciliatory and pacific measures, it is *a* "*declaration of war* that ought to follow, "and not *pretended reprisals*, which, in such "case, would only be *a real act of hostility* "*without a declaration of war*, and would be "contrary to public faith as well as to the "mutual duties of nations." The reason whence this doctrine proceeds is very clear. Reprisals, because they are made upon grounds *evidently* just, and for an "*unde-*"*niable debt* or an injury *actually received*," need not be preceded by a declaration; whereas war must be preceded by a declaration, because, where there is room for dispute as to the justice of the grounds, no advantage, particularly so great an advantage as

is obtained by the making of reprisals, ought to be enjoyed by either party to the certain disadvantage of the other. To render your making of reprisals, separate from war, justifiable, there must not only be a possibility, but a very evident probability, of your thereby obtaining redress for the wrong complained of; for, if by mere reprisals there be no such probability, must it not clearly appear, that your reprisals are made as subsidiary to your intended warlike operations; and that, therefore, you are availing yourself of the garb of moderation and humanity for the purpose of taking an unfair advantage of the power, with whom you have resolved to go to war? In what degree, then, we may ask, did this probability exist in the instance before us? What were the wrongs of which we complained? That Spain had supplied France with money, and that she was, at the time we attacked and captured her ships, making warlike preparations in her ports, without being willing to give us the necessary satisfaction and security. What sort of satisfaction and security we required, and how far she is chargeable with having refused what was necessary upon this score, remains to be gathered from the particulars of the negotiation; but, if she did refuse us the *necessary* satisfaction and security, will any one pretend to say, that there was the most distant probability of our obtaining it by the capture of her plate ships? Could we have captured them all, and could we, at the same time, have seized the treasure in her mines, we might have pleaded the capture of the four frigates as part of a measure of *prevention*, for the future, for *one* of the wrongs complained of; but, as it was certain that we could not effect that, and, as it was also certain, that, as to the other wrong complained of, the capture would be totally useless, and could only tend to widen the breach, that capture cannot be regarded as having for its object to obtain redress without having recourse to war, an object essentially necessary to the justification of an act of reprisals. To be convinced of the soundness of this reasoning, we have only, for a moment, to consider, what would be the inevitable consequences of acting upon opposite principles. If, upon every provocation, or, in every case where a recourse to war would be justifiable, we were to allow it to be just to make reprisals upon the party offending, every state, secretly resolved upon war, would assuredly begin by making reprisals, and would, as we have now done, reserve its declaration of war to answer that of the enemy, on whom it had already been exercising all the acts of hostility within the compass of its power. Hence would arise such a confusion of rights and of duties, such a constant suspicion, such a total uncertainty as to what each power would do, that all confidence must be destroyed, and the faith of treaties and of nations would soon cease to exist even in name. At peace with Spain, with a minister actually negotiating at her court, and with our ships of war as well as merchantmen hospitably received and riding in her harbours under the faith of a treaty of peace and amity, we did, under the name of reprisals, attack and capture her men of war upon the high seas. And would not Napoleon, after having made peace with us, find it very easy, under the same name, and without giving us an hour's notice of his intention, to justify his invasion of England or Ireland? Those who have set up the cry against "eternal war," will do well to reflect on the consequences which must proceed from the principles that they are now so desperately endeavouring to maintain.——Neither let it be forgotten to observe, how charmingly this pretext of reprisals harmonizes with the assertion, that the *war* with Spain is *just, politic*, and *necessary*, the only justification of reprisals being, that they are evidently intended, and are evidently likely, *to prevent the having of recourse to war!* I have before me a ministerial pamphlet entitled, "The "*justice* and *policy* of a *war* with Spain de- "monstrated." I could refer to, perhaps, twenty essays in the newspapers, some of which essays are said to have issued from the foreign office, professing the same object: and, one of the ministerial prints now lying upon my table, concludes its remarks on the Spanish declaration, by invoking (impious invocation!) the aid of The Almighty in this "*just* and *necessary* war!" All that has been proved, all that has been asserted, in these publications, is just so much proved and asserted against the making of reprisals, against that very, that sole ground of defence, to which I would pledge my life that the ministers will finally betake themselves. To this dilemma, therefore are they reduced: the attack and capture of the Spanish frigates was an act of war, or it was an act of reprisals: if the former, England has made war without a previous declaration, and her honest and gallant sons, have, by the cupidity of her ministers, been led to do a deed at which honour blushes and humanity shudders; if the latter, the ministers did, in that very act, declare, that a war with Spain, that that which has now taken place, it was desirable to avoid, and, of course, that it was neither necessary nor politic.—— It will ap-

pear strange, if they succeed, with all their quirks and with all their verbosity, in deceiving the people of England upon this subject; but, they may rest assured, that they will have no success in this way with either the courts or the people of foreign countries. There, the attack and capture of the Spanish frigates will be viewed in its true light, and will excite the feelings which such deeds are calculated to excite. This is the second war which has grown out of the treaty of Amiens; on both we had good and honourable grounds to enter, and, such has been the admirable address of The Family of the Addingtons and the Pitts, by whom we have the happiness to be governed, that, on both we have entered with the opinions of the world decidedly against us. The war with France, instead of being undertaken for the purpose of keeping that encroaching power within due bounds; for the freedom and safety of Europe and of England amongst the other nations; has from our own misconduct, from the misconduct, from the ignorance, the selfishness, or wickedness of our ministers, been ever regarded as having arisen from our desire to keep possession of the island of Malta, contrary to the stipulations of a solemn treaty; and thus have we furnished another trait for that odious and galling comparison, which our enemies have so often and but too justly made: "The pre-"tence of the second punic war," says Grotius, "was a contest about Saguntum; "but, the true cause was, the secret dis-"gust which the Carthaginians had against "the Romans for the hard conditions they "had imposed on them in the low ebb of "their fortunes." The present war will be equally odious, will excite still more suspicion of us in the world, a still greater distrust of us, a greater contempt for our national character, and, if possible, a still stronger determination in the powers of the continent to stand aloof from "a ministry "and a people *too honest* to have any con-"nexion with them."——It has been stated in the public prints, that in consequence of the representations of Spain, the great powers of the continent, and particularly our ally, Russia, has shewn a disposition to address remonstrances to our government. A ministerial paper, speaking upon this subject says: "The intelligence of the "capture of the Spanish plate ships excited "emotions at St. Petersburgh not very "favourable to the interests of Great-"Britain; but, nearly at the same time, "information was received in that city, "of the atrocious seizure of Sir George "Rumbld, which was *a fortunate coinci-"dence.*" A set-off, we are to suppose, for our seizure of the Spanish plate-ships! Indeed, it would be by no means wonderful, if the Emperor of Russia were to remonstrate on this subject, especially when we are so eager to draw forth remonstrances against the violations of public law committed by France. To advance the pretexte of *reprisals*, while the partisans of ministers are openly endeavouring, in all manner of ways, to convince the people of the policy and necessity of the *war*, so completely exposes us to the world, that it is impossible we should not be universally condemned and detested for this act.

PEACE.—The rumours which, in consequence of a messenger having arrived from France, have gotten afloat upon this subject are various. Some say, that nothing further than an arrangement relative to prisoners is intended, while others possitively assert, that Napoleon has actually made overtures of peace. This latter is by no means improbable. The surrender of Malta, the due execution of the treaty of Amiens, being the foundation of the treaty, there can be no doubt that peace, for a short space, might be very desirable to him. Overtures coming from him would be a mark of moderation; if they lead to peace, he is acknowledged by us as Emperor of the French; if not, he has shown that he is not implacable; that he is not that insatiable monster, whom we are praying to God to prevent from "swallowing us up quick." Either way he is sure to gain something. But he will never flinch from the treaty of Amiens. He left off at Malta when he spoke to us last, and with Malta he will again open his mouth. And, notwithstanding all that Lord Melville and Mr. Pitt have said about Malta, they will, when Mr. Wilberforce gives them the hint, be ready to make peace and to give up Malta.——The ministerial papers seem already to have received their cue; and the following curious extract from one of them will enable the reader to form some judgment as to what will hereafter, as to certain points, be the language of Mr. Pitt and his "young "friends"——"The arrival of the French "messenger has produced *a very agreeable sen-"sation* in the minds of the public. That "sensation is, however, very different from "the joy that was expressed by the rabble "of London, when at the close of the last "war, General Lauriston brought over the "ratification of the preliminaries. Then, "the people appeared to prefer a peace of "any sort to the national honour. They did "not then inquire whether the peace was

" honourable or dishonourable, advantageous " or disadvantageous; they seemed only to " consider, that peace would make provi- " sions cheap, and save them from the pow- " er of France.——The nation has now, " however, a much more dignified feeling, " and one better suited to its greatness, and " to its character. If the country now de- " sire peace, it is not because it sees any " thing to dread in the continuance of the " war—it is not that it is mistrustful of ei- " ther its strength or its resources: It wishes " an honourable and secure peace, founded " in the *independence of other nations*. Se- " cure itself from the ravages of an invading " army, both by its strength and its insular " situation, it wishes peace, principally with " a view of restoring to the continent of " Europe, that tranquillity and happiness " which the consequences of the French " revolution, and the war which followed, " have so long banished from it. As to the " internal affairs of France, although we " would certainly *prefer* a Bourbon to a Buo- " naparté, yet the age of chivalry is now so " far gone, that *we begin very much to doubt* " *whether the continent of Europe will ever* " *rise in arms about the difference between one* " *family and another*. Buonapar é most " probably wishes for peace, because it " would, perhaps, be a recognition of him " by this country, in his new capacity. This " recognition is of great consequence to him " personally, but it is of none to this coun- " try. We have acknowledged the French " republic in its jacobin form, in our nego- " tiation at Lisle. At Amiens we acknow- " ledged Buonaparté as chief magistrate, or " governor of France; and it is indifferent " to us by what title he governs, as long as " he keeps possession of the supreme " authority of the empire. We never " inquire by what acts an " Emperor " of Morocco," or a " Dey of Algiers," has " gained his throne; it is sufficient to us, " that while they fill it, and are allowed to " exercise the powers of government in " those countries, we treat with them as if " they were lawful sovereigns.——The pre- " sent war was not embarked in for the pur- " pose of restoring the Bourbons; but it " was *because* Buonaparté, intoxicated with " his successes on the Continent, *oppressed* " *and enslaved all those feeble nations that he was* " *bound by treaty to leave independent;* and be- " cause he even ventured *to treat this country* " *as a conquered nation*. He assumed a lofty " and a menacing tone towards us, and " treated our ambassador with haughtiness " and insolence. He evidently thought " that this country was completely humbled, " and durst no more oppose his projects; " and therefore he freely gave scope to his " boundless ambition.——Being now, how- " ever, *convinced that this country does not in the* " *the least fear his power, and that it has re-* " *sources to carry on a war of any length against* " *him*, it is not unlikely but he may really " desire a peace, which is full as necessary " to France as to any other conntry, and from " which no individual would gain so much, " personally, as he himself, who would be " firmly established in one of the finest em- " pires of the world.——But be these facts " as they may, we feel a perfect confidence " that our *present* ministers will not suffer " themselves to be deceived by the name of " peace; and that they will continue the " contest so long as it may be necessary for " the honour of this country, and the inde- " pendence of other nations."——To say that Buonaparté treated this " as a *conquered* country" is false; to say that he treated our minister haughtily is true; but, did we go to war for that? No, says this ministerial writer, we did not embark in the war for that alone, nor for the purpose of restoring the Bourbons, but we went to war, " *because* Bu- " onaparté oppressed and enslaved all those " feeble states that he was bound by treaty " to leave independent." Now, what states were these? Holland, Switzerland, and Italy. Has he ceased to oppress and enslave these states? or has he, since the beginning of the war, added Portugal, Hamburgh, and poor Hanover to the number? What a shame is it, then, to pretend, that we have succeeded in restoring the independence of the nations of the Continent! But, before the war, " he evidently thought that this coun- " try was completely humbled," and, by the war, we have *convinced* ihm, " that " we do not, in the least fear his power, and " that we have resources to carry on a " war of any length against him." An assertion similar to this last was solemnly made by Mr. Pitt only sixteen months before he advised the making of the treaty of Amiens, not " a peace of *necessity*," indeed, but " a *ne-* " *cessary* peace." Napoleon is convinced that we are terribly afraid of his power, or that we are, towards both God and man, the greatest hypocrites that the world ever saw. Why all our alarms, our beacons, our orders for holding in readiness all the means of speedy flight, and for laying waste our own country? Are such precautions taken by a people who are " not in the least afraid?" We shall not deceive Napoleon by such talk as this. He looks at our actions, and he sees marks of fear in every one of them.—" Our *pre-* " *sent* ministers will not be deceived by the

"name of peace." Which is as much as to say, that our *former* ministers were so deceived. But, this writer seems to forget the "reconciliation" which has taken place in The Family; that our present ministers were our former ministers, and that Mr. Pitt, that famous man of words, secretly advised and openly defended the former peace.—Yes, Mr. Pitt will submit to almost any terms of peace, or he will greatly dece ve every one who knows any thing of his character and views, and of the embarrassed state of the public resources. He knows not which way to turn himself; the funding system, that sole monument of his fame, is crumbling away before him; with the army he can do nothing, all his projects tending only to expose him to ridicule; allies upon the Continent he can obtain none, who can lend him any effective aid; and, as to parties, he feels his power to be rapidly on the decline, and must perceive that he has not a sufficient stock of public reputation to preserve him from oblivion in retirement. Thus situated, he will, of course, hail peace, or any thing else that affords him a chance of prolonging his power. But, the help he would gain from peace would be very small. No peace, in our pre ent relative situation with respect to France, and chained down as we are by the Pitt system, could be lasting. Napoleon has marked out this kingdom for conquest; it is to be his last labour; any peace that he may make with us, during the existence of the Pitt system, will only be intended to prepare the way for the execution of his grand design. Peace and war will always be in his hands, and he may drain us of just as much money, or rather labour, as he pleases. The Pitt system seems to be the only one by which Englishmen could have been rendered the slaves of France, without an actual conquest of their country.——It is curious to observe how Buonaparte moves on at every change of things with respect to us. We make peace with him, he becomes Consul of France and president of the Italian Republic for life. We make war upon him, he becomes Emperor of France. And, when we make peace with him again, it will not be at all wonderful, if he extends his empire eastwardly nearly as far as that of Charlemagne. That done, we should again hear of his "haughtiness and insolence." We should again see the base wretches of the 'Change gaping towards Dover to know the value of the "public securities;" we should see the stocks rise and fall just as it suited the agents whom the French might place here for the purpose of drawing away the fruits of our labour. Nothing can be more true or more evident than this; that, in a country where there is a funding system like ours, the public resources must always be at the mercy of that foreigner, be he who he may, who holds in his hands the absolute power of peace and war. Our situation, in this respect, is new. The kings of France could have drained us to death, could have drawn to their own use the fruit of our labour, by occasional threats and warlike preparations; but, they did not attempt it, because it would instantly have brought on war on our part, and would have exposed them to severe punishment from the powers which we, in such case, were always able to raise up against them. This is not the case with regard to Napoleon. We can bring no power to bear upon him; he need not fear the effects of our resentment; if he has threatened us with war, and has thereby drained us of a million or two, we have only to wring our hands, or again call forth our volunteers, and send out our blockading squadrons and catamarans. While the present system lasts, therefore, we must remain armed, and indeed, at war, or we must labour for France. This was the state of things which Mr. Addington had floating in his mind, when he made the memorable declaration, that "we were at war, *because "we could not be at peace.*" The same words will, it is more than probable, be used in justification of the next war after this, which, if peace should take place now, may be regarded at about eighteen months or two years distance. What Macbeth says of sleep, Mr. Pitt may say of peace. "Me-"thought it said, have peace no more! Pitt "hath murdered peace!" The Pitt administration and system have certainly banished real peace from England. It is not a mere change of ministry that would do any good: it is a change of system that is wanted, and that must take place, or the country will never be, for one moment, in a state of peace and security.

THE FAMILY RECONCILIATION seems, in the mean time, to be drawing towards a consummation. Mr. Henry Addington is to be a peer, and President of the Council. The title which he has chosen is that of Lord Viscount *Raleigh* of Combe in the county of Devon, where, it seems, he has a farm or a house or something formerly the property of Sir Walter Raleigh, whose *descendant* Mr. Addington will, by some people, now be considered! There was a person (whose real name I forget) who was made a peer since the commencement of the Pitt administration, and who expressed a desire to be called Lord *Agincourt!!!!!* The Earl

of Buckinghamshire (late Lord Hobart) is to be Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. Mr. N. Vansittart, and Mr. John Sergent, are, as treading in the steps of George Rose and Mr. Long, to become Right Honourable Privy Counsellors; upon which list also Mr. R. P. Carew is to be placed. Mr. Hiley is supposed to be destined for the Paymastership in place of George Rose, whom we may reasonably expect to see rewarded for his "long and faithful services" with a pension and a peerage. What further changes of office will take place we shall probably learn in a few days. But, it is evident, that Mr. Bragge must have something, and also Mr. Bond. Not the worshipful Mr. Bond, but a Mr. Bond, who was lately a lord of the Treasury. The Chief Secretaryship of Ireland is, probably, kept open for one of these gentlemen. And this puts one in mind of the Right Honourable George Tierney, of whose services, it is greatly to be apprehended, His Majesty and the public will now be deprived, at least, for a considerable time. This gentleman's situation in parliament must, one would think, be somewhat awkward: he stands pledged always to remain opposed to Mr. Windham; and yet, it is hardly probable that he will side with the ministers, both of whom now appear to have left him to shift for himself. What will happen to Mr. Canning is, if possible, still more uncertain. It has been stated, in the public prints, that he has been admitted, in order to make his peace with Mr. Addington, into the presence, not of the minister himself, but into that of the Right Honourable Hiley, who, it is said, signified both his and his brother's forgiveness. If this be true, Mr. Canning will probably remain in possession of his house, his salary of four thousand a year, and also of his *other place*, mentioned in the PLAIN REPLY.* Of Mr. Yorke we hear nothing, in this grand distribution of power and profit. Mr. Addington seems to have regarded him as having withdrawn himself from under his protection; and, indeed, this Mr. Yorke appears to have done by the intimation, which, at the time when the Addingtons were opposing the ministry, he gave of his intention to support the ministry, on all future occasions;* and also, by his keeping away from the subsequent debates and divisions, even upon the only measure which he thought proper to oppose.——There are strong evidences, it is said, in the language of the two main branches of The Family, that little cordiality is, at last, likely to be found between them; but, the most formidable difference to the country is that, which, in all probability, will arise with regard to public measures. The Addingtons are said already to sigh after *peace*. If so, the two parts of the ministry will soon begin to be competitors for public opinion, or, rather, for the support to be derived from the ignorance and baseness of the worst part of the people; and that, too, upon a subject of all others the most important. Mr. Addington declares for peace; "profound peace?" and though those, who expect real peace from him, may hereafter be called "nature's fools and not his," the odds are, that Mr. Pitt will think that the winning side; and, then, without any regard to the interests or safety of the country, a peace will be concluded, merely that one part of the ministry may not get an advantage over the other! What a noble exemplification is here of Mr Wilberforce's doctrine of consulting popular opinion, and of the system which has been invariably pursued for the last twenty years, namely, the choosing of measures with a view to the permanence of administration, and not of the greatness and security of the country! Here we have the true secret of the decline of the empire. This is the box of our political Pandora. A man bent upon *power*, and comparatively indifferent to *fame*; ever fearful about his own interests, and always bold (that is to say, careless) about those of the country, would adopt precisely that rule of conduct, according to which this nation has been governed for many years past; and such conduct would naturally lead to precisely the consequences, which we now see to have taken place.

* In speaking of this gentleman's conduct in parliament, I stated, in the preceding sheet, that he *voted* with the ministry, through the several divisions on the Treaty of peace; but, I now find, that he voted on *neither side*.

THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

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* See Parliamentary Debates, vol. II. p. 565.

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